

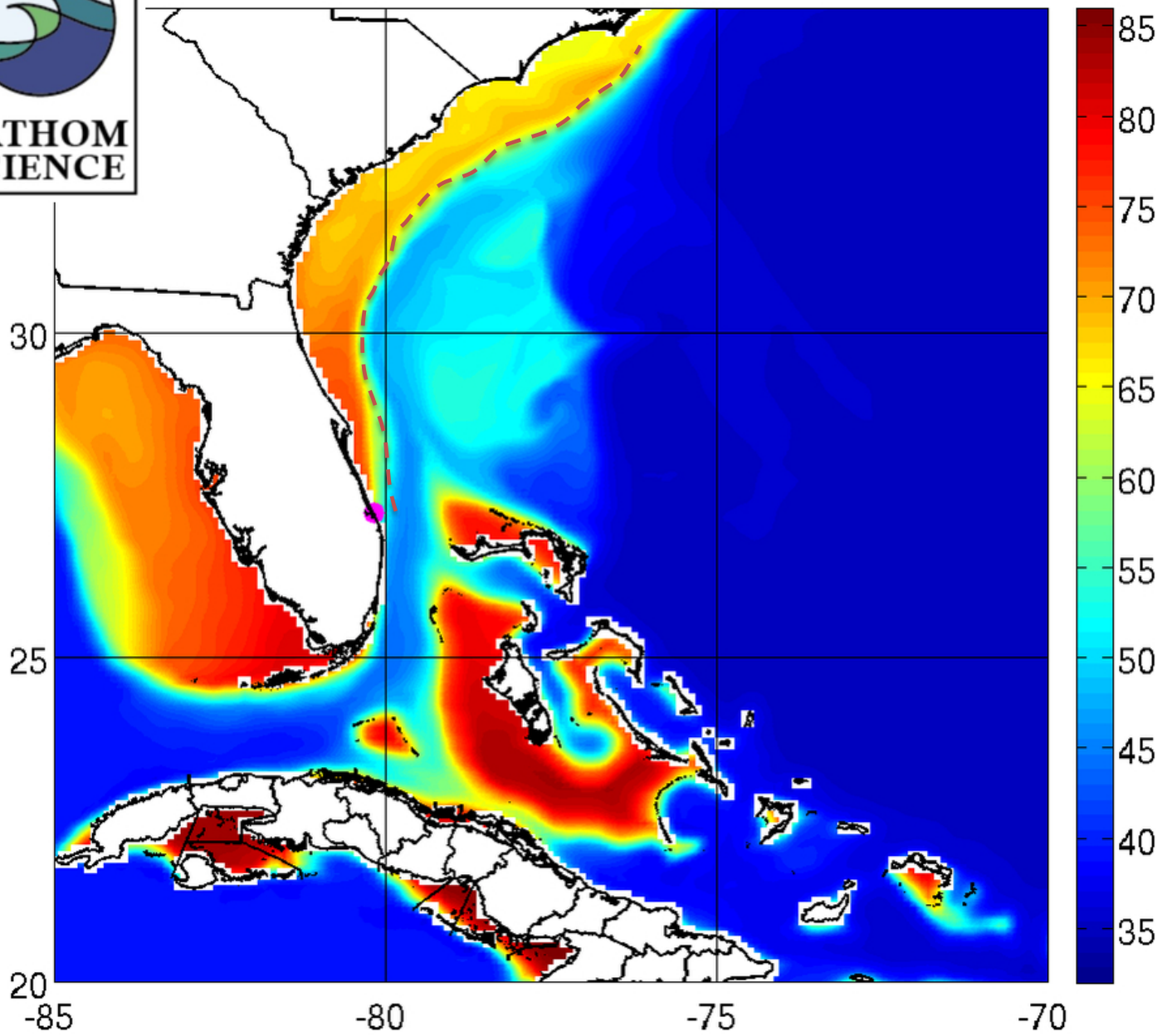
# Supporting the Blue Economy SECOORA Annual Meeting

Stakeholder Meeting: Blue Economy II

Fisheries Observing Needs:  
A View from The Water

Ben Hartig, Commercial Fisherman and Former  
South Atlantic Fishery Management Council Chair

Bottom Temperature °F: 02 May 2018



# Dramatic influence of ocean current and water mass variability on local fisheries

## Synopsis of the event -- Ben

- “we just had a significant event occur where the stream moved offshore starting on May, 7, and the thermoclines showed a couple days after. Ocean turned over and plankton bloom occurred with green to grayish water out to 400 feet off Stuart on Sunday.”
- “There was no Gulfstream influence 11 miles offshore of Stuart on Sunday, in fact the current was slightly south on that day”
- “The best catches of king mackerel so far this spring occurred on May 5,6,and 7. The catches dropped off dramatically on the 8th and 9th and did not improve until today (16th)”

## What happened

- As the Gulf Stream meandered offshore, strong shelfbreak upwelling happened, bringing cold and nutrient-rich deep water onto the shelf.
- The plankton bloom was subsequently stimulated, reducing the water clarity.
- King mackerels ran away from these cold and murky water on the shelf, causing drop-off in catches.



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